They separate the back from the front by a part which goes from temple to temple, leaving two small moustaches at the two temples. They gather all the rest behind the head and let it hang down their back. When they go somewhere, they tuck it up behind the head very neatly and tie it with cords of cotton reddened with annatto, at the end of which is a small tassel or a woman's thimble with white glass beads. Some add to that a little fine white cotton which they spread on the bundle of their hair, with different-colored feathers which they stick in. Some also make, from the same material as their baskets, a form of crown which is colored and adorned with tufts of feathers all around, above and below, while others wear a form of headband. Still others make bonnets of the same material and wear them for fear of the cold or other inconveniences. But usually they are bareheaded.

The women comb the men's hair and grease it with oil to make it shine and become blacker. This is the first thing they do when they are going somewhere.

They do not permit their slaves to wear long hair. They singe the hairs of their legs and arms. They do not wear beards. And it is one of their perpetual amusements, when they have the leisure, to pluck out the hairs of their beard one by one with a knife. They pierce their ears, the cartilage of the nose between the nostrils, and the lower lip, to attach pendants of various sorts.

They redden all of their body with annatto. Sometimes they make themselves all black with genipa. At their great drinking parties they have themselves painted black as a Moor in a particular fashion. They most often use annatto because it also serves to keep the sun from burning them and protects them [36] from the sharpness of the sea water.

They sometimes wear large necklaces of white glass beads; sometimes they wear at their neck the wings of various birds which they let dangle over their shoulders and on their stomach. Others wear necklaces made of the teeth of cats, agoutis, or of the cal'couni [calcouchi], which is believed to be the ounce (?). Most of them wear a whistle at their necks, often made from the bones of an enemy.

They also wear scarves of corded cotton, reddened with annatto, in the form of a cross, before and behind. The scarves are sometimes made from white glass beads. With these beads, they also

846 as if with a knife, until blood comes. Then the father is rubbed all over with spiced water which causes him great suffering. He is sometimes so weak from the fast and from this bleeding that he has to be led away by the hand. While the others get drunk at his expense, he continues to fast [50] for several more days. When the fast is over he does not eat, however, any birds or fish—except crabs, and they must be females—while his children are still feeble and weakly.

846 This faster gave Father Raymond very good reasons for all this.
●751 It is because, he said, the infants would have stomach aches or defective members, depending on which animals their fathers ate. They would have, for example, a long, round snout if the father ate an eel; small, round eyes if he ate a parrot. (For this same reason they never eat manatees, for fear their children will have small, round eyes like this large fish.) They would have crooked legs if the father ate pigs, and so forth for the other animals.

846 We will add here in passing this amusing fact: there is a type of carangid, which is a good fish with a slightly curved backbone. When they eat this fish, they take great care not to throw the bones carelessly away; they deposit them on the ground very softly for fear they may become hunchbacked and are astonished that the French make fun of this.

846 The women, having given birth, press the forehead of their infant
851 with their hand in order to flatten it. That is the reason they have broad foreheads. When the infants sleep in the daytime, the women hold them so that their feet are on one of the mother's knees, while the head, which she continues to press with her hand, is on the other. At night, they hold the infants to their side, with the result that being accustomed to sleep so warmly, the child cries dreadfully if the mother moves ever so little away from its side.

At the end of fifteen days or three weeks, they invite a sort of godfather or godmother who pierces the ears, nose, and lower lip of the infant and cuts its hair in front and gives it its name. They, in exchange, rub his head and neck with oil. [sic] The mothers never wrap up their children when they go somewhere. They carry them under the arm in a little sling of cotton which they pass over the shoulder in the fashion of a scarf.

852 When the child is one or two years old, the father gives [61] a feast called oléroac [oléroüac] at which the child's hair is completely

CHAPTER XII

Their Diseases, Death, Mourning, Burial, and Fancies Concerning The Soul

164 Nearly all the Caribs have that disease called the sickness of
757 Naples, or as others say, yaws, which is scarcely any better. The disease is fairly common among the Negroes, and some of the French also suffer from it. It is not, however, at least not always, the responsibility of Venus, since even small children have it. To cure themselves, they do not try sweating at all, but grate shellfish, which they swallow with water. They rub themselves with genipa, or with reed leaves burned with liana, which they call mouchao or miby. They do not get well as soon as patients who are made to sweat.

165 One sees very few other diseases among them, and it is a marvel that living such a mean life they are so healthy and fat and live so long. For it is certain that they usually live very long. It was only four or five months ago that the father of The Baron died, and his wife, The Baron's mother, still lives. The Baron, whose wife is still living, has a daughter; this daughter has a daughter and this latter already has children. So The Baron is a great-grandfather and his mother is a great-great grandmother [72] and The Baron's daughter, who is a grandmother herself, still has her own grandmother. And this is not the only example to be cited. Their long life must be attributed to their lack of cares.

●751 They blame their demon for their diseases and if the illness is long and severe they call the boï'ayko to consult him about it. They
758 have a number of remedies which the women apply to the sick, but they treat the sick no more delicately than they do the healthy.

Relatives rarely or never visit their sick kin. Generally married
[734] people do not visit the sick, because, they say, their bodies emit a force which afflicts the sick even more. That is why when one of The Baron's sons was ill, neither his brother, his sisters, nor his father went to see him; only his mother treated him and she did not communicate at all with his father.

727 When some among them are killed in war, they do what they can to recover the bodies and bury them. Following is how they bury their dead.

10. Lore and Learning

759 The Caribs have no knowledge of liberal arts or mechanical skills, not even having words to express them. However, they practice them to the extent that nature has given them knowledge, and necessity requires it. They do not know how to open a vein, but this does not mean that they are ignorant of drawing blood if they must. The instrument they use is neither a lancet nor scalpel, and they do not pierce the vein nor make a deep cut. Instead, they slightly scratch the skin with an instrument which they make from 413 an agouti thigh bone which has an agouti tooth imbedded in one end and is tied with a cotton thread. They sharpen the tooth, and holding the handle press lightly on the flesh and make scratches. Then they rub off the blood with ollalloman straw. [190]

[157] [263] All of the Caribs are extremely melancholy, moody, and silent. They have appetites for odd foods as if they were pregnant women, eating chalk, or if they do not have it, eating earth. The women and children all do it, which make them dry and finally causes their death. I have always in my accounts mentioned their ● 751 melancholy and the difficult nature of their language. It has been 754 commonly said that the devil beats them. I have never seen nor heard of such a thing from the Caribs in all of the nineteen years I have spoken with them. The reason why such a statement has been made is twofold. Firstly, when lying on the left side their spleen is compressed by the left elbow. It sends black fumes to the brain which causes black and horrible dreams, as if they were at grips with maboyas or were being taken away by them. I have taken some of the Caribs in my arms when I saw them in such pains. I wiped off their sweat and carried them out of their hammocks, and they would have willingly fallen on their knees to thank me because I had protected them from the maboyas who were beating them. The second reason for the statement that the devil beats them is that at the slightest harm they suffer they say it is a spell or an evil given by maboyas or sorcerers. This does not mean that they have been beaten, but rather that they have been sent or given such evils through spells. [341]

278 The value of herbs is not unknown to the Caribs who collect 757 them when they are sick in order to drink as medicine the juice which they draw out. Ordinarily the herbs are crushed between their hands and put into a pot full of water. They rub this mixture on the sick

person, whom they expose to the noonday sun, and let the medicine dry for a time. They know trees with great medicinal powers, and they peel off the second bark and crush it to press out the juice which they drink as a medicine. The women sometimes specialize so thoroughly in this profession that they are suspected of sorcery. They have killed certain women because of these suspicions, although one is never certain of the truth of these charges. [329]

The Caribs sometimes wear around their neck necklaces made of small, long calabashes as big as the finger, and filled with Manafénix meat. Others wear bits of jagnar skin, claws of birds of prey, and other things which they wear as relics, especially at their feasts. At other times they always have some of these around their neck. I do not know whether this is out of superstition or to protect themselves from magic spells, or from an evil, or in the hope of becoming valiant. It seems they wear them for all these reasons and especially for the last two. [192] The Caribs when they are sick do not tolerate married people visiting them during their illness because they believe that their presence would impede their recovery. [365]

The chîpiou tree has sap which is so bitter that it is used to designate all bitter things. If the Caribs handle its bark they communicate such a great bitterness to everything they touch that these things could not be used. They pound this bark, press out its juices and rub people with it who have yaws, that is to say, the great pox. I believe that it has some benefit against this evil. [160] They dry a reed, burn it, and rub the ashes on those who have yaws. The stems of the reed are used to lath roofs or enclose the walls of their houses. [351] Yaws is a natural disease which is as common in the islands as syphilis is in France. The Caribs cure themselves easily and without danger, not only because the temperature of the air is very even, but also because of the powerful remedies growing in the Torrid Zone. These remedies were taken by an 1,800 league voyage to France and lost their potency. They use the juice of chîpiou bark which they rub on the outside, blacken themselves with Genipa juice, and use ashes of reeds. They take the juice of some vines like the mibi which is mixed with the grated back part of conch shell. When the big pimples burst they apply little tufts of raw cotton which binds the lesions and prevents deformity. But yaws are not very dangerous although common among

757 them, and all the above mentioned remedies heal without steam
[49] baths or mercury. Conversely, small pox which is very rare among them is very dangerous in the same way that the plague is for us in France. [478]

751 They believe that pains in the joints such as gout are caused by
765 the boyes of South America and their gods. [426] They use a light-colored green stone as a remedy for kidney stones, to help women give birth, and for epilepsy. The women hang them around their neck like one of the most precious of their jewels. They receive them from the men who bring them from South America. There are also
757 imitation green stones which have no value. [445] The riboúlichi
[84] is a true rush if one of its roots is crushed and absorbed in some liquor by a woman in childbirth; it makes the delivery easy, but if too much is taken the child will be harmed as has been actually seen. [439]
[169] Ophthalmia is a common disease among the Caribs which appears almost every year, and is spread in the islands inhabited by the Caribs. It causes a fair number among them to be one-eyed. During the first five or six years this evil did not seem to approach the French, but now it makes its violence felt too often. [397] The Caribs purge themselves only when they are extremely sick. However, they only eat crabs, Lambis, bugaus, and some other poor nourishment which causes many boils. They pierce some boils with a ray's tail and squeeze the others to empty them. If the pus is such that it will not come out they take a hair which they dip into it and empty it. [340]
757 The chibouleléme is a common weed which the Caribs boil in water.
278 They then use the broth to relieve themselves from constipation. [147] The Caribs shred the skin of the palm Christi and make a compress for the forehead as a remedy for headache. They heat the leaf and rub the afflicted part with it and receive relief. [25] Balium is a herb with a stench used as remedy against fever. [171]

752 When the Caribs rid themselves of chiggers they make a small cut with a fish bone or a sharp little splinter and press them between their nails and make them leave. They also use shark oil or porpoise oil to make them leave or urucu mixed with oil of couàhen. [148]

757 Herbs which cure the wounds made by poison arrows are called
[271] toulàla. [475] To cure arrow wounds they use a palma Christi leaf which they warm on the fire and rub on the wound. According to Captain Baron one of his hosts had been hit in the heel by a poisoned

8: Taylor
785, 751, 262

ST13 Callinago ST13

[For information on fasting and other restrictions as a means of avoiding forces harmful to the individual on specific occasions, see category 784.]

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950 .
ST13 Callinago ST13

On the other hand, a new-born child may be adversely affected by the diet or activities not only of its mother and father, but also by those of any others who come near it. Mother and child should not be visited, moreover, by persons who are in any way "abnormal." For the Carib this includes—besides those who are deformed, disabled, or lacking in some sense or faculty—all who are, to use a current expression, "heaty": this epithet being applicable both to pregnant or menstruating women, and to anyone who is momentarily heated by exertion, excitement, or emotion.

Girls and women are required to observe both dietary and occupational restrictions during their menstrual periods. At these times, they must on no account eat any products of the chase killed by dog or gun. One informant told how his dogs had inexplicably become heavy and incapable of speed; and how, on hearing a sort of slopping noise in their bellies, he had made investigations, and discovered that his own sister, out of gluttony, had concealed her condition and partaken of his last catch. Some say that a gun or dogs so "spoiled" may be "blessed," and thus put back to rights; but that in this case, it is the guilty woman who will then suffer for her negligence. Nor must menstruating women handle the hunter's dogs or weapons, cook food, or take part in ceremonial songs and dances. They should not, moreover, wander abroad nor bathe in the river, since spirits of the bush and of the water alike are addicted to women in this condition.

In British Honduras, though no longer in Dominica, the bereaved spouse must observe certain restrictions on diet and freedom of movement; but the extent and duration of these are largely dependent, at the present time, upon the degree of conservatism prevailing in the family concerned. However, it is generally held to be dangerous for a widow to go to the manioc-field for several months—some say eight—after the death of her husband.

From a comparison of the two sets of data, it seems clear, at least, that the "mystical participation" of the father in the life of his new-born child was—and is—by no means unique in Island Carib concept; and that the form, duration, and sanctions for the restrictions tended to be the same when these were undergone for one's own sake alone as when they were imposed, primarily, for that of another. As we have seen, not only the new-born child, but also its father, the sick and the wounded, and, in fact, all those turning one of life's critical corners, are or were thought to be endangered by a sort of physical exuberance emanating from heated, overfed, sexually or otherwise excited, pregnant, or menstruating bodies, be it their own or those of others associating with them. For the seventeenth century, the same period of seclusion—one or two months—is indicated for the bereaved, the slayer, the new father of a first child, or the adolescent; and for the first three of these, the same sanctions—growing old sooner, being less sure-footed, etc.—are mentioned explicitly. The voluntarily undergone deprivations and sufferings of the old-time Carib

8: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1950
ST13 Callinago ST13

were not intended to assist the spirit of a deceased spouse or parent, nor to atone for the slaying of an enemy; but rather were they meant to protect the living by a procedure which can only be described as "turning off the heat" at those points most susceptible to contagion or attack; and the same was probably true in the case of neophytes and adolescents. For obvious reasons, the new-born, the sick, and the wounded had more to fear from others' exuberant "humors" than from their own; and the bathing, after a nocturnal delivery, of all the household's possibly sexually excited men, the taboo against the visits of married or newly married people to those who were sick, and the modern avoidance of confined mother and child by those who are "heaty," all tend to the same conclusion: that we are not justified in regarding the "couvade" as a distinct phenomenon as far as this culture is concerned.

It is understandable that there should be some ambiguity in the situation of new parents of a first child, since they, as well as their offspring, are at a vital turning-point, and hence in need of protection. Nor is it surprising that the new mother must submit to some chastening of her "animal spirits"; for, attenuated as these may be by her confinement, they still would be "too strong" for the baby she has to suckle, if not indeed sufficiently so as to endanger herself. It is noteworthy that the same period of seclusion as is observed today—forty days—was reported by du Tertre in the seventeenth century; and if the old chroniclers say little about the parturient's regimen, it is doubtless because they assumed it to be analogous to that current in their own culture. Rather naturally, what struck them was that the father's physical exuberance should be feared—for himself, for his wife, and for the child; and that if his first-born were a son, he must fast more rigorously than the mother. But it would appear that he also possessed, in his own body, a valuable antidote to the evil effects which another's—or even his own—negligence might bring upon the infant; for we are told that a sickly child was rubbed with blood which the father drew from himself by scarification; and we have seen that his sweat is held at the present time to have similar therapeutic virtues when employed in the same way.

In most cultures and at most times, various restrictions have been placed on menstruating women; yet without the concept of some mystical intercourse between killer and killed, eater and eaten, it would be hard to explain how a hunter's dog (or gun) could be contaminated by a menstruating woman's ingestion of its catch, or how such a woman could then be affected by the "blessing" of the injured instrument.

Despite the considerable differences of content and extension which distinguish the dietary and occupational restrictions of 1950 from those of 1650, we still may recognize the same underlying conceptual pattern of "contagion." By this term is to be understood here the sum of potentially harmful or undesirable factors—be they impersonal forces or spirits—to which an individual

mountains surround narrow ravines, where spring water trickles. The country is almost entirely wooded; it is virgin forest in all its vigor, and the most varied species grow there side by side; the imposing silk-cotton tree, Eriodendron anfractuosum, the large-leaved chestnut tree, Sloanea massoni, the logwood tree, Haematoxylon campecheanum, the mahogany tree, Swietenia mahogany, the anatta-tree, Bixa orellana mingle with palms of all sorts, gigantic bamboos and a multitude of arborescent ferns. All these trees are interlaced with endless lianas, and in their midst, giant like, rise splendid gum-trees, Dacryodes hexandra, from whose trunks one can cut an entire canoe. The district is crossed, at some distance from the coast, by a road which is well-defined but not practicable for carriages, which is part of the road which makes a complete circuit of the island. In the part which crosses the Carib territory, one /135/ finds a few paved sections, which date from the French occupation. The climate is humid and it rains frequently, even during the dry season. The temperature varies between 25° and 32° C., but the ocean breeze moderates the heat at all times and in the mountains there is always a certain freshness.

This part of Dominica is today inhabited by about a hundred Caribs of pure stock and about 400 mestizos, who have some black blood.

The Carib is of medium height, but has fine muscles and is strong; the women are noticeably smaller than the men. Their eyes are black, comparatively small and somewhat set back, the cheek-bones prominent, the teeth white and well-set, the hair black, straight, shiny, quite long, but generally cut amongst the men; the latter are usually beardless, although some have, nevertheless, a short moustache. The skin is quite light or tends to be somewhat brown, but it is no darker than that of Europeans who live in the open in regions where the sun is very hot. Formerly the Caribs were completely naked and it was their custom to completely stain their bodies red with roucou (1) diluted /136/ with carapat oil, which protected them against insect bites,

1. Roucou or rocou, from the word urucu used by the natives of Brazil, is the word for the grains of the roucou tree, from which they extract a red dye. The roucou tree, a shrub of 4 to 5 meters in height, is very common in the Antilles.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

of the Dominica Caribs, is included here. The plant is to be found growing in most Carib dooryard gardens. Leaves of la pite are split for half their length. Then a strong cord attached at convenient height to a tree is twisted into a loop around one of the split segments and pulled tight. The other end of the leaf is wound around a short thick stick held with both hands. A strong steady tug on the latter disengages the leaf fiber. The other segment is treated in like manner, and finally the unsplit half of the leaf as a whole (the disengaged fiber being now used to wrap around the stick). After being dried in the sun the strong white fiber (up to four feet long) is spun on the leg or thigh into any thickness of fishing line that is required. Most of it is twine (i. e. 2-ply) but 3 and even 5-ply are sometimes made. La pite is used also to make thread which is always strengthened before use by rubbing with *mani* (see discussion of *mani* under *Symphonia globulifera*). Such thread is employed for sewing the edging of larouman (*Ischnosiphon Arouma*) baskets, and for making the little cords worn by father and new-born child as a protective charm to ensure the latter from suffering possible ill consequences of strenuous work undertaken by the father.

Specimen citation: 101 (T), 3306. Both specimens represent la pite.

Bromelia karatas Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 285. 1753.
Pingouin, Karatas. — *karâra* (w).

Pingouin is known from the Antilles and occurs on the continent from Mexico to Colombia and Brazil. The plant occurs in Dominica chiefly at lower elevations in the drier thickets of the windward coast.

---

likely a specially grown fibrous form of edible *Ananas comosus*. Plants of la pite differ from the common pineapple in having longer leaves with fewer and more widely spaced marginal prickles; moreover the fruit is small (no larger than one's fist) and is said to be indigestible. Compared with the fibers of la pite those contained in the leaves of the ordinary pineapple are considered by the Caribs very weak and therefore cannot be prepared for twine. Pittier (60) however states that the fibers of pineapple leaves are «fine, strong, and of great value». The Kraua grass, grown by the Barama River Caribs of Guiana, is possibly identical with la pite. Kraua grass is a source of fiber used in the manufacture of bow strings, fish lines, and decorative ligatures for the legs.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

PETTOLACCACEAE. POKEWEED FAMILY.

X 824 **Petiveria alliacea** Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 342. 1753.

Kudjuruk. — *émeradiuma, lewéru.*

A widespread woody plant found in Florida, the West Indies, and continental tropical America. Although common in Dominica especially at lower elevations, this species is cultivated by the Caribs chiefly near their houses.

[788] The Indians consider kudjuruk to be both a charm and a medicine. The plant is used, together with honteuse (*Mimosa pudica*) and sou marqué (*Cassia bicapsularis*) as an ingredient in [751] a ritual bath taken at the time of the new moon. It is also rubbed on the body as a protection against evil spells. Prepared as « tea » [278 844] it is considered an antidote to poisoning, as well as an aid to women in parturition. For further uses of kudjuruk in ritual baths see *Ipomoea pes-caprae* and *Ocimum micranthum*.

Specimen citation: 38C (T), 3194.

Phytolacca rivinoides Kunth & Bouché, Ind. Sem. Hort. Berol. 15. 1848.

Pokewood. — Z'Oreilles Mulâtre. — *tarikai* (« her/its »).

This pokeweed is to be found in continental tropical America as well as throughout the West Indies. In Dominica it is a familiar species in woodlands, clearings, and abandoned gardens chiefly at middle elevations.

[262 278] The young leaves are often boiled by the Carib as an edible green, which is also said to be « good » for dropsy.

Specimen citation: 26 (T), 1160.

Rivina humilis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 121. 1753.

Rivina laevis Linnaeus, Mant. 1 41. (1767).

Demoiselle.

An herb of tropical America, frequent on waste land and fields in Dominica.

[278] Caribs make a medicinal « tea » from demoiselle.

Specimen citation: 3376.

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

A shrub native to the tropics of America but naturalized in the Old World, and found in Dominica on hillsides and waste ground at lower elevations.

According to MACFADYEN quoted in (18) the juice of the leaves and buds of this plant are employed in the form of an infusion or bath for the cure of ringworm and other skin diseases. The pulped leaves and flowers are also used in Jamaica as poultices for the treatment of sores.

The Caribs bathe themselves with the juice of crushed dewy leaves to help eradicate skin diseases.

Specimen citation: 3400.

Cassia biexpansaria Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 376. 1753.
Adipera biexpansaria Britton & Rose in Br. & Wils. Bot. Porto Rico (Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5). 370. 1924.
Sou Marqué.

A shrub of the West Indies and continental tropical America.

The Caribs sometimes cultivate sou marqué. It is one of the constituents (with *Mimosa pudica* and *Petiveria alliacea*) of a ritual bath taken at the time of a new moon. This bath is considered to be a protection against evil spells. For other uses of sou marqué see *Ipomoea pes-caprae* and *Orinuva microanthum*.

Specimen citation: 143 (T).

Cassia hirsuta Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 378. 1753.
Dibrachys hirsuta Britton & Rose in Br. & Wils. Bot. Porto Rico (Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5). 372. 1924.
Z'Herbes Puantes (« Male »). — *kulábule, shábere kúko* (w) (« ants' hammock »).

A widespread herbaceous plant of tropical America.

Both this species and the next are called by the Carib z'herbes puantes; however, a distinction is made in that *C. hirsuta* is considered to be the « male » plant and *C. occidentalis* the « female ». *C. hirsuta* is considered to be the better or « stronger » of the two. An infusion of the ground seeds of either z'herbes puantes is employed as a febrifuge and as a coffee substitute. The latter is preferred (to coffee) by pregnant women.

Specimen citation: 122 (T).

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Annatto, a native shrub of South America, is widespread on the islands and continent of tropical America. In Dominica it is commonly grown as an ornamental but is also spontaneous at lower and middle elevations.

A vegetable dye, obtained from the waxy red aril surrounding each seed has had extensive usage. Today it is employed to color butter, cheese, oleomargarines, and (in Germany) even white wines. YRARRA states that in Jamaica it is supposed to possess medicinal properties (69). In the past annatto was employed most commonly as an ornamental paint, warpaint, or insect-repellant bodypaint by many of the Indian tribes of tropical America (among them the Taínos of the Greater Antilles), and even today is used by such widely separate groups as the Colorado Indians of Ecuador (65) and the Baraúna River Caribs of Guiana.

Today annatto is to be found cultivated close to most Carib dwellings. Formerly red *bièt* dye was much used (mixed together either with the oil obtained from the seeds of the forest tree, *Carapa guianensis*, or with that gotten from the kernel of the yattahu palm, *Rhytiscos amara*) as a body paint because of its property of protecting the skin from insect bites and from the ravages of sun and weather[47]. Island Carib prisoners taken by Columbus are also recorded to have had «... their eyes and eyebrows stained circularly around... for ostentation... and also because it gives them a ferocious appearance» (69), but whether the dye was obtained from annatto or genip is not mentioned. To obtain the dye, ripe seeds are boiled in water which is then allowed to cool at which time the seeds are rubbed in the liquid with the palms of the hands. The water, after passing through a strainer which removes the now useless seeds, is allowed to stand during which period the coloring matter is deposited as a waxy vermilion substance. The latter may be dried (with or without oil which gives it consistency) and kept in balls until needed. Carapa or yattahu oil is added when the *bièt* paint is to be used. When only a small quantity of the dye was required it could be obtained by pouring a little oil on the hands, then rubbing a

[47] According to Labat (34) this paint preserved Indian corpses from disintegration for several months.